



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Former Healthcare Employee Indicted for Involvement in Stolen Identity Tax Refund Fraud Scheme and Unauthorized Disclosure of Patient Information

A Montgomery, Alabama resident self-surrendered earlier today after she was indicted March 3 on one count of multi-object conspiracy to commit identity theft and wire fraud, two counts of possessing 15 or more unauthorized access devices, two counts of aggravated identity theft and one count of wrongful disclosure of personally identifiable health information, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciraolo of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney George L. Beck Jr., of the Middle District of Alabama.

According to court documents, Alana Wells worked at a healthcare company from June 2011 through August 2013, where she had access to patient information protected from disclosure under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. She is alleged to have stolen the names, dates of birth and social security numbers of patients from her employer's database and provided these identities to **Fredrick Hill**. Hill then provided the stolen personal identification information to **Christopher Davis**, who, along with others, used it to file fraudulent federal tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requesting tax refunds.

If convicted, Wells faces a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison on the conspiracy charge, 10 years in prison for each count of access device fraud, one year in prison for the charge of wrongful disclosure of personally identifiable health information, and a mandatory minimum sentence of two years in prison for each count of aggravated identity theft, which will be in addition to any other term of imprisonment she receives. She also faces substantial monetary penalties and restitution.

An indictment merely alleges that crimes have been committed. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciraolo and U.S. Attorney Beck commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who investigated the case and Trial Attorneys Jason H. Poole, Kathryn A. Kimball and Michael C. Boteler of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan S. Ross of the Middle District of Alabama, who are prosecuting this case.

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